FORUM

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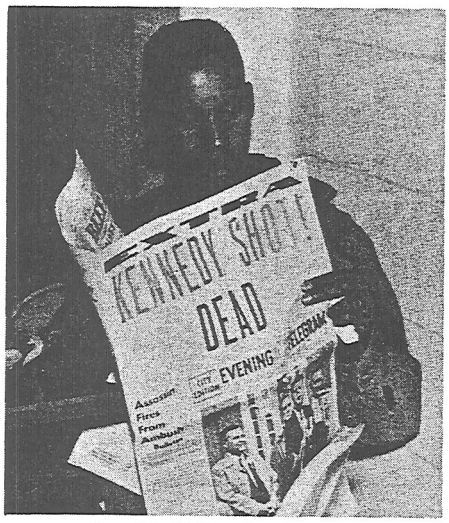
SHAW TRIAL DELAYED



Nov. 22, 1963 — June 6, 1968

VISITS FROM RFK BARED

By Mark Lane

"There are guns between me and the White House:" Robert Kennedy to Jim Garrison.

On Tuesday evening, June 4, just one hour before the polls closed in the California primary, I was being interviewed in Washington, D.C. by John Hightower over television station WFAN. I was asked why Robert Kennedy appeared to accept the findings of the Warren Commision. For some months I had been aware of conversation between emissaries from Robert Kennedy to New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison.

Accordingly I answered the question frankly and disclosed the nature of the various meetings between Garrison and Robert Kennedy's representatives. Over a period of several weeks, two different emissaries had arrived in New Orleans. Each had sought out Jim Garrison: each stated that he was carrying a message from Robert Kennedy; each was known by Garrison to be associated with Robert Kennedy; each carried almost the identical message; each said that Robert Kennedy did not believe the conclusions of the Warren Commission and agreed with Garrison that a conspiracy had taken the life of Presiden Kennedy.

Robert Kennedy, they said, would investigate the assassination of his brother thoroughly if he were elected president and would vigorously prosecute those responsible. The essential purpose of the visits was to "reassure" Garrison that despite his public utterances, Robert Kennedy very firmly held a different private view.

Garrison asked why Senator Kennedy felt it necessary to suppress his dissent. Each emissary answered with the same phrase: He (Robert Kennedy) knows that there are guns between him and the White House.

(See Garrison Interview on Page 3)

NEW ORLEANS (CCI)-----A few days before Clay L. Shaw was to have been brought to trial in New Orleans on charges of conspiring to assassinate President John F. Kennedy, a federal court judge intervened and issued a temporary restraining order against further prosecution of Shaw by D. A. Jim Garrison.

Shaw's defense attorneys had questioned the constitutionality of the Louisiana conspiracy laws under which Shaw is charged. The defense also asked that Garrison be forced to release to them all evidence he had amassed against Shaw.

No legal precedent existed to justify the intervention of the federal government into such a case being prosecuted under state statutes.

Shaw's lawyer also had asked the court to rule the Warren Report valid and binding on all United States courts. If this is done, severe complications could result. In the first place, it would mean that Lee Harvey Oswald had been judged guilty of murder without the benefit of counsel or the formality of a trial; a direct violation of his rights.

Secondly, of course, it probably would prevent forever the prosecution of principal figures in the presidential assassination - an object the federal government seems intent upon achieving.

Federal intervention in Garrison's case proved the latest stumbling block in a series which had prevented legal prosecution of Shaw and others since the New Orleans probe was revealed about 18 months ago.

Garrison reacted swiftly to this latest delay in the prosecution of Shaw. On June 18, Asst. D.A. James L. Alcock asked the federal government to dismiss without further hearing the suit filed by Shaw seeking to block his trial.

Shaw's attorneys asked that four of Garrison's aides be compelled to answer questions asked when they appeared for depositions sought by Shaw's lawyers.

Garrison had advised his staff to give the Shaw lawyers nothing "but your name, office rank and social security number".

In urging dismissal of the Shaw suit, Alcock said the court really is considering more than just the Shaw case, and hanging in the balance is the whole issue of comity between state and federal courts.

Asst. D.A. Alcock contended that as a matter of law, Shaw's suit should be dismissed without further evidentiary hearing. He claimed there is no need for an injunction because Shaw has adequate remedies by way of jury trial, appeals to higher state courts and by way of federal habeas corpus procedures.

Alcock pointed out that all defendents are inconvenienced by criminal court prosecutions, but he could see no difference between the inconvenience to Shaw and that of other defendents.

In his suit, Shaw claimed Garrison was "persecuting" him. He sought to have the district attorney enjoined from further prosecution. Shaw's claims are being considered by a panel of three federal judges.

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ZAPRUDER FILM IS CONCLUSIVE

In a sense, the Warren Commission Report is on trial in New Orleans. The actual indictment is specifically citing Clay Shaw for his alleged part in the assassination of President Kennedy on November 22, 1963.

The most startling and significant piece of evidence which District Attorney Jim Garrison has offered to the grand jury has been a copy of *Life's* Zapruder film. This is an 8mm motion picture film taken of the assassination.

The copy seen by the grand jury was identical to the original print viewed by the Warren Commission. The film was shown numerous times and at various speeds. The purpose was to study the effects of the fatal bullet which struck the President. What was found could not have been more obvious. The following are the comments of several members of the audience after having seen the Zapruder film.

Assistant District Attorney Andrew Sciambra said that, "Kennedy could not have reacted so violently to a hard right to the head. Otherwise it is reminiscent of watching a boxer driven back and out by a tremendous blow. The shot came from the right front. No one who sees the film can doubt it. I guess that's why no one can see it."

Louis Ivon, Garrison's chief investigator, said, "I can't see how the Commission could have come to the conclusion that there was a lone assassin in the Book Depository building when it is so obvious that the man was hit from the front. I ask myself, did they fail to look at the film or completely disregard it as evidence."

And O'Brien Elliot, who is an independent film expert, comments, "It is conclusive evidence that the shot came from the grassy knoll. There is no question but that it could not have originated from the Book Depository. I think the film should not be withheld from President Johnson, by President Johnson, until 2039. I think he should see it tomorrow."

What Elliot is referring to is President Johnson's concealment of numerous documents of conclusive evidence, including the medical autopsy and numerous photographs, all placed under a "secret" classification which will not expire until the year 2039 A.D.

When the press asked the President why he had locked up this information until that specific year, he said, "By the year 2039 A.D., all those who were living at the time of President Kennedy's assassination will be dead. Then, when the information is released, no one will be hurt by what is found."

But who is Big Brother protecting? If there was a CIA conspiracy, or for that matter if there were any others involved in Kennedy's death—and miscellaneous data seemingly ignored by the Warren Commission indicates there was—then they will also be dead, more than likely from natural causes and not from due process of law. Is this what Americans call justice under a democratic constitution?

In seeking a true perspective on the events surrounding Kennedy's death, we, as conscientious citizens, seek only the truth with regard to this tragedy.

If there is nothing to be refuted within the Warren Commission Report and if Oswald did indeed act alone in this murder, then would not an unbiased, non-government agency of professionally competent criminologists reach the same conclusions as did the Commission after reviewing all available evidence, including that locked up until 2039?

The sentiment is growing for such a review to be conducted, and you can do your part to become an informed, responsible citizen in this regard. The Washington State Chapter of the Citizens' Committee of Inquiry (CCI) will be active until some tangible conclusions have been reseolved. The CCI's address is 7001 106th St. E., Puyallup, Washington 98371. It should be noted that the CCI is not merely a local organization; it is nationwide in its effort to resolve the truth.

Join them today and help restore our waning democracy. The alternative is to backslide as many of us are doing today, and to relegate our privileges to those in Washington who pass upon policy and designate what information we will be allowed to receive.

When this happens, when the voice of the citizenry loses its representation, democracy will have died. □

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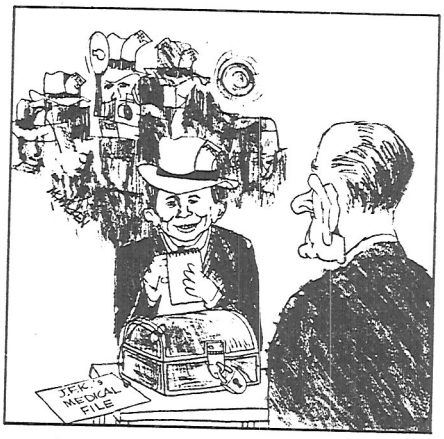

"Mr. President, why are you concealing this conclusive evidence until the year 2039 A.D.?"

"Because by that time all those who were living at the time of the assassination will be dead. Then when the information is released, no one will be *hurt* by what is found."

Photo of Ray Near JFK Slaying?

NEW YORK (AP)—The head of a research group looking into the assassination of President John F. Kennedy said today a photograph of a man arrested near the assassination scene in Dallas just after the shooting strongly resembles a sketch of James Earl Ray, in the killing of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Trent Gough, a Canadian actor, who is chairman of a group calling itself the Kennedy Assassination Inquiry Committee, compared the sketch and the photograph and said, "It's identical." They both show a long-nosed, thin-lipped man.

The photograph is of one of three men arrested in a railroad freight yard in Dallas Nov. 22, 1963—the day Kennedy was slain. The man was described as drunk at the time.

Gough said the three men were arrested by Dallas Police Sgt. D. V. Harkness and were turned over to his superior.

He said, "there is no positive identification of any of the three."

Pressing the Issue

EDD A. JEFFORDS, State Chairman

The recent tragic murder of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, coupled with the killing of Dr. Martin Luther King, has elicited new interest in the possibility of a single, wide-spread conspiracy to kill anyone who dares speak out against racism and global warfare. Still, however, when there is definite evidence of a conspiracy at least in one assassination - that of President John F. Kennedy - the mass media tends to ignore it.

As Mark Lane pointed out in his new book, A Citizen's Dissent, much, if not most, of the blame for this attitude can be placed not with any grand government directive, but with individual newsmen themselves. Most newsmen apparently would rather accept a spoon-fed government handout (i.e. The Warren Report), than dig into the matter themselves and find the truth. As Lane also illustrated, most reporters are aware of what line their publications prefer on a given issue and adhere to that policy.

An excellent example of irresponsible press coverage is the Garrison Probe in New Orleans. After a brief flurry of news reports when the investigation first came to light, most newspapers, including the wire services, dropped all follow-up accounts. For whatever reasons, the decisions of the individual publications appear to have been their own. Outside of direct covert government intervention, there is no other way to explain the lack of published news as the probe continued and even produced convictions.

Whether or not Garrison eventually will prove his case in court is not the issue. The point is that much new and important evidence was first brought to light in his investigation and men were indicted by grand juries for the murder of our president. What should have been the story of the decade was ignored or relegated to the back pages. If the press is to regain its respect as a check on the government and protector of the public interest, it must re-evaluate its position on a four-year-old murder. Editorial writers and columnists cannot continue to call for an end to crime and violence in the streets without noting that the murderers of John Kennedy still are free.

FORUM is one of very few publications attempting to give continuous coverage to new and significant developments in the JFK assassination case - but we would like nothing more than to be put out of business by well-meaning, informed, and truth-serving commercial media.

REFERENCA

(Books suggested for reading by persons interested in the assassination. -Compiled by Harold Porter)

MARK LANE, Rush To Judgment, 1966, 478pp, $5.95; A Citizen's Dissent, 1968, 290pp, $6.95, Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

HAROLD WEISBERG, Whitewash, 1965, 368pp, .95¢, Dell; Whitewash II, 1966, 384pp, .95¢, Dell; Oswald in New Orleans, 1967, 404pp, .95¢, Canyon Books.

SYLVIA MEAGHER, Subject Index to the Warren Report and Hearings and Exhibits, 1966, 150pp, $4, The Scarecrow Press; Accessories After the Fact, 1967, 477pp, $8.95.

JOSIAH THOMPSON, Six Seconds in Dallas, 1967, 323pp, $5.95.

EDWARD JAY EPSTEIN, Inquest, 1966, .95¢, Bantam Edition.

JOACHIM JOESTEN, The Garrison Enquiry, 1967, by Peter Dawray associated with Tandem Books Ltd., London.

SYLVAN FOX, The Unanswered Questions About President Kennedy's Assassination, 1965, 221pp, .75¢, Award Books.

PENN JONES, JR., Forgive My Grief, 2v., 1966-67, Midlothian Mirror, Midlothian, Texas.

(A complete bibliography of all works on the subject soon will be available free from CCI)

INTERVIEW:

Garrison Comments on Lane

LOS ANGELES, Calif. (CCI)----In a recent interview with Art Kevin, of KHJ News, Jim Garrison commented on the statements made by author Mark Lane that "emissaries from Robert Kennedy" had visited the District Attorney in New Orleans to assure him the senator would re-open the investigation of his brother's death were he elected president.

Some doubt had been cast on Lane's statements by serious students of the assassination, since only a week before the senator's murder, Lane had written a column denouncing RFK for his non-support of Garrison.

Of Lane's most recent statements, Garrison said they were "essentially true". He added, "I would use different words in a few senses; for example, 'emissaries'".

"We (RFK and Garrison) had mutual friends who came down to visit from time to time. As a result I finally came to understand Sen. Kennedy's silence. He was silent, I think, because he realized the power that lay behind the forces that killed his brother," Garrison said.

Garrison continued, "One of these mutual friends pointed out that with these forces still active in America, Bobby Kennedy was very much aware there were guns between him and the White House. The details about what he said he would have done afterwards, I rather would not go into, except to say that what Mark Lane is saying is true."

BOOK REVIEW

By George Rennar

James, Rosemary & Jack Wardlaw, Plot or Politics? The Garrison Case and its Cast. Pelican Publishing House, Maritime Bldg., New Orleans. 167pp., $1.75.

The authors are reporters for The New Orleans States-Item who have been covering the Garrison investigation from the start. In fact, it was Mrs. James who broke the story. The core of the book, therefore, consists of information which appeared in the New Orleans press. Most of this was ignored by media elsewhere. This book is one of the few available sources containing an account of any substantial portion of the events in New Orleans.

The book apparently is about one year old. It appears to have been written last summer shortly after the conviction of Dean Andrews for perjury. While much has happened since then, the "Garrison thesis" already was established and most of the key figures in the investigation were public knowledge.

The book is full of background information, photographs and human interest. A very useful appendix purports to list all persons connected with the probe.

The authors neither praise or condemn. Their conclusions are cautious, even tentative. Able journalists, they have an interesting story before them and, at least when the book was written, took pains not to disclose possible future developments.

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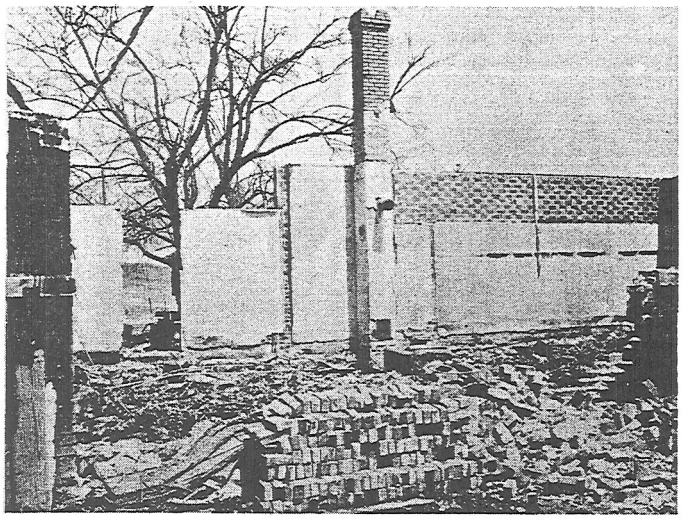

Remains of Wheat home

Washington CCI Checks Clinton Wheat !

(Ed. Note: The following article was investigated and written by a Washington State CCI member currently residing in Klamath Falls, Ore.)

KLAMATH FALLS, ORE. (CCI)-----Still unknown are the present whereabouts of G. Clinton Wheat, a former resident of the Klamath Falls area, who, on May 13, was subpoened by D. A. Jim Garrison. The New Orleans official subpoened Wheat after hearing the testimony of Loran E. Hall, of Kernville, Calif.

Hall, a bartender who once was active in anti-Castro activities both in this country and Cuba, was himself subpoened by Garrison in December 1967, but did not go to New Orleans until last month.

Before going to New Orleans to testify, Hall told a news conference in Los Angeles that he had attended a meeting in mid-1963 at Wheat's Los Angeles home where the killing of President Kennedy was discussed. Also present, according to Hall, was Edgar Eugene Bradley, for whom an arrest warrant was issued by Garrison on Dec. 21, 1967. Bradley successfully has fought extradition to Louisiana.

Wheat lived in Los Angeles at 233 S. Lafayette Park Pl. The house since has been torn down. According to the Los Angeles Times, Wheat was born in Rochelle, La. in 1913, and was convicted of murder in Angola, La. in 1940. He reportedly was sentenced to life imprisonment but the sentence was commuted to 15 years and in 1951 he was released from prison. From 1961 to 1964, he lived in Los Angeles, where in 1964 he was the West Coast leader of the Committee of One Million Caucasians to March on Congress. This reportedly was an anti-Semitic, anti-Negro, anti-Catholic group organized by the Ku Klux Klan. There is no record that the announced march ever took place.

Since leaving Los Angeles, Wheat has lived in several communities in the Klamath Falls area, most recently in the Poe Valley. He worked as a ranch hand and as a heavy equipment operator in Klamath Falls.

On May 6, he and his wife, Elizabeth, moved from their home in the old Poe Valley Schoolhouse, from which they had been evicted for failure to pay their rent, and departed with their belongings, claiming to be headed for Ashland, Ore.

Later, the same day, the building in which they had been living burned to the ground as the result of a fire of undetermined origin.

After Wheat was subpoened by Garrison on May 13, attempts were begun to locate hime. Following the discovery by a hunting guide of his wife in a remote cabin near Burney, Calif., Sheriff's officers of Shasta County visited Mrs. Wheat on May 16. At first she identified herself as "Madge Merkle", but later admitted her true identity.

She threw a veil over her head and refused to talk in front of newsmen, but relented inside the cabin and told Sheriff's Capt. Harold Cramer that her husband had left the cabin on foot about a week earlier with no luggage and had not returned.

She said he had been kept on the run by minority groups, Communists and members of the press.

According to the Redding Record-Searchlight, use of the cabin had been secured for Wheat by Hal W. Hunt of Burney. Wheat and Hunt reportedly had been seen together in Burney, where Hunt publishes a right-wing newspaper, The National Chronicle, to which the Wheats subscribed.

Four months before President Kennedy was assassinated, Hunt wrote in an editorial that "German generals exerised their right of resistance when they attempted to kill Hitler after he failed to keep his promises." Hunt said American leaders "at the very top have violated their oath of office" and that Americans, like the German generals, had the right of resistance.

Calling for their impeachment, Hunt stated "a prison term is not the least" these leaders should receive. He also wrote that President Kennedy should be "drawn and quartered", but later called that "only a figure of speech".

He insisted he never would have advocated shooting the president.

Wheat's political convictions led to his being described by his acquaintances in the Klamath Falls area as a "fanatic".

According to the Redding paper, Wheat tried to sell a .30-06 rifle with a telescopic sight to a man in that city last winter, and the Klamath Falls Herald & News said he tried to sell a machine gun to a Klamath Falls man.

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